

# Brief Summary of State Drought Task Force Meeting One

The Minnesota State Drought Task Force was convened by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on July 21, 2021. The primary purposes of the Task Force are information sharing, coordination and planning. The first Drought Task Force meeting included updates on current drought status, brief summaries from members about their respective organizations' drought-related responses, and planning for future Task Force meetings.

Per the Minnesota Statewide Drought Plan, the Minnesota DNR determines state drought phases and responses based on specific climatological and water data. Task Force members may share information and perspectives regarding these factors, but making phase determinations is not a role of the Task Force.

Task Force member responsibilities:

- Be knowledgeable of your agency/organization's actions in response to drought, and provide that information to the Task Force.
- Inform the Task Force of significant drought response challenges in your agency/organization.
- Coordinate drought responses with other Task Force members as appropriate.

Key topics discussed and actions being taken by Drought Task Force member organizations include:

- Monitoring weather, stream conditions
- Implementing water-reduction plans at utilities
- Educating industries and residents on water conservation methods
- Taking some preparedness/response actions
- Following their water monitoring activities closely and checking gage accuracy.
- Addressing heightened concern and preparations regarding livestock watering, foraging, haying and grazing.
- Monitoring crop conditions and soil moisture closely; some new tools are in place.
- Monitoring drought-related impacts on water quality, such as harmful algal blooms.
- Monitoring and responding to fire danger/wildfires. Many open burning bans are in effect.
- Monitoring potential impacts to buffalo herds and other managed wildlife.
- Communicating closely with local governments on drought preparedness and response.
- Increasing public information about drought, its impacts, things people can do.

State Drought Task Force members and supporting staff (marked with an asterisk) in attendance:

- Katie Smith, Minnesota DNR
- Randall Doneen, Minnesota DNR
- Pat Rivers, Minnesota DNR
- Luigi Romolo, Minnesota DNR
- Paul Lundgren, Minnesota DNR\*
- Ann Pierce, Minnesota DNR\*
- Mark Hauck, Minnesota DNR\*
- Amanda Dirnberger, Minnesota DNR\*
- Greg Husak, Minnesota DNR\*
- Kim Flanagan, Prairie Island Indian Community
- Deb Dirlam, Lower Sioux Community
- Rick Wahlen, Eden Prairie community water supply manager and liaison to American Water Works Association
- James Fallon, Upper Midwest Water Science Center, USGS
- John Walker, Upper Midwest Water Science Center, USGS\*
- Dave Jones, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA
- Dan Loftus, USDA
- Michelle Page, USDA
- Elizabeth Nelsen, USACE
- Teri Alberico, USACE\*
- Shawn DeVinny, National Weather Service (substituting for colleague)
- Dan Hawblitzel, NOAA
- Ali Elhassan, Met Council
- Heidi Roop, U of M Climatology
- Mark Seeley, retired U of M Climatology (will be rotating off the team)
- Todd Biewen, MPCA
- Marni Karnowski, MNDOT
- Joe Kelly, DPS
- Jacob Beauregard, DPS\*
- Riley Slimmer, DPS\*
- Tom Hogan, MDH
- Jeff Berg, MDA
- Lucia Hunt, MDA

- Dave Weirens, BWSR
- Ben Benoit, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
- Keith Karnes, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe\*
- Joshua Jones, Red Lake Band of Chippewa
- Dan DeSmet, Upper Sioux Community
- Brian Martinson, Association of MN Counties

The Statewide Drought Task Force will meet every other Thursday at 2 p.m. The next meeting is August 5<sup>th</sup>. The Task Force will be convened as long as needed while drought conditions persist.

Media and other interested parties are welcome to attend a brief Q and A with Task Force members from 4 - 4:30 p.m., as well as at future meetings. This will give interested parties and reporters the opportunity to ask questions.

## Agenda for August 5 meeting

**Time: 2 p.m.**

**Opening: Katie Smith, DNR Ecological and Water Resources Director**

Reminder of State Drought Task Force (DTF) purpose, mission and member roles

**Drought Situation Review and Update: Luigi Romolo, State Climatologist**

Drought status, stream flow, lake levels, fire danger, and crop report

**Agency Actions: Task Force members**

Each representative will give a brief update on drought related actions their agency or organization has been taking

**Drought Issues Discussion: All**

Given growing impacts, what issues are we anticipating that may need additional information?

**Other Topics: All**

- Clarification of drought phase triggers

- Community Water Supply Plans and Drought Management

**Availability for Media/Interested Parties, 4:00-4:30**

- Meeting summary
- Q and A